

Podcast: What If World

[Episode: 154: What if Mr. Eric wasn't real?](#)

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Transcription by Keffy

[Rising harp scales followed by the What If World theme song.]

Lyrics: What if kittens played the glockenspiel? And what if unicorns were real? What if you could fly or travel back in time, we welcome you to What If World. What If World. This is What If World.

[News station music.]

Poppa Loo: Hey there, folks, and welcome back to Poppa Loo's news. The show where you get the inside scoop about all the ups and downs, ins and outs, and backwardses of What If World. We've got a question here from a patron named Alice Lee, who asks What if Mr. Eric wasn't real?

Mamma Jamma: Of course Mr. Eric isn't real! You think there's some storyteller in the sky bossing me around? No, sir.

Poppa Loo: Mamma Jamma, I'm doing my news show.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I want to be on your news show. Let me read the next question.

Poppa Loo: Oh, for crying out loud.

Mamma Jamma: This one's from John William. He loves trains and geography and he wonders what would happen if the What If World people all turned into elements of the solar system?

Poppa Loo: Well, that explains why my uncle turned into a lump of carbon. [Laughs] Nice question, John William. Although you have doomed us all.

Mamma Jamma: No, sir. If there's no Mr. Eric, then I don't have to turn into helium or hydrogen.

JF Kitty: Poppa Loo, I've got a breaking story for your news shows.

Poppa Loo: Oh, that's great. I love getting the fresh scoop!

JF Kitty: Okay, well, you can go scoop my litter while I give these meow outs.

Poppa Loo: Well, that's not exactly what I—oh, okay, sure.

JF Kitty: We've got meow outs to John Charles, who loves Star Wars, Catherine who loves unicorns, Joseph, who loves Batman, and Audrey who loves strawberries.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, what a big happy family.

JF Kitty: And we've got one more shout out to Emma from Minnesota, who likes me and Fred the Dog, and her two cats named Darius and Tinkerbell.

Mamma Jamma: What adorable kitty names!

JF Kitty: So thank you, Emma, Audrey, Joseph, Catherine, and John Charles. Now, let's find out—

Poppa Loo: Wait, wait a minute. Whoa whoa whoa whoa. [Running noises.] Wait a minute, it's my news show, so I get to cue up the questions.

Mamma Jamma: Okay, Poppa Loo, go do your news thing.

Poppa Loo: I'm already doing my news thing, Mamma Jamma. Oh, geez louise.

Mamma Jamma: Okay, I'm sorry. So just say, what if Mr. Eric wasn't real?

Poppa Loo: Stop it, I know.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, zip and lock and throw away the key.

Poppa Loo: So let's find out what if Mr. Eric wasn't real? And what if people all turned into elements of the solar system?

[Rising harp scale.]

Poppa Loo: Good evening, everyone. I'm Poppa Loo, and we're here on the Lee William Express, and we're gonna find out what people really think about this Mr. Eric, who apparently doesn't exist. Petrina the Pirate, what do you think about all this?

Petrina: Oh, I think it's rather nice. There used to be a what if question turning the world upside-down week after week and now I've got as much time as I need to weave my tapestries uninterrupted.

Poppa Loo: And what's your opinion about people turning into elements from the periodic tables.

Petrina: I don't know much about science, you'll have to elaborate.

Poppa Loo: Well, for example, you seem to be turning into some sort of gaseous vapor.

Petrina: Oh dear, look at that. Well, I suppose I'd rather be a person than a vapor, but I'll figure out how to make the best of it.

Poppa Loo: Petri... uh...

Mamma Jamma: Uh-oh, she evaporated.

Poppa Loo: Mamma Jamma, would you mind checking on the kids? Make sure they don't evaporate or transmogrify or anything like that?

Mamma Jamma: Oh, fine, but only because you look so handsome holding that microphone.

Poppa Loo: Okay, okay, childrens' existence is in peril, Mamma Jamma.

Mamma Jamma: I'm going, I'm going.

Poppa Loo: Randall Radbot, the lower half of your body has turned into solid gold. Do you blame all of this on Mr. Eric?

Randall Radbot: Oh, like, I have no idea why this is happening, so I'd really like to focus on the solution rather than the problem.

Poppa Loo: Oh, that's a great idea. With your super advanced robot brain, you can figure out anything, right.

Randall Radbot: Oh, for sure. It's just a quick compu-beep-boop-tation, man.

Poppa Loo: And let all these folks enjoy Poppa Loo's news, here. We're gonna cure this weird elements problem.

Randall Radbot: Easy. First thing's first, you gotta get all the way to the front of the train, and then you're [scrambled speech]. Gooold... Radbot...

Poppa Loo: Hello? [Thud thud thud] Okay, he's solid gold. I probably should have bantered a little less and focused on the solutions. Mamma Jamma, what's going on with our kids back there?

Mamma Jamma: Okay, okay, don't freak out.

Poppa Loo: Oh, any time you say that I know I'm about to freak out.

Mamma Jamma: The kids turned into a couple of puddles of mercury, but don't worry, I sucked them up with an eye dropper. I'm pretty sure this one's Zack and that one's Zizi.

Poppa Loo: Oh, I'm freaking out!

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I know! I'm freaking out a little bit, too, but let's take a deep breath and focus. Did you find out anything in your interview?

Poppa Loo: Randall Radbot said we had to make it to the... [rewinds tape].

Randall Radbot: You gotta get all the way to the front of the train.

Mamma Jamma: Okay, and then what?

Poppa Loo: And then he turned into Solid Gold Radbot.

Mamma Jamma: Okay, then let's get to the front of the train, and then we'll figure it out.

Poppa Loo: Good thinking, Mamma Jamma, maybe we can gather some clues in this next train car.

[Crunching noises]

Okay, listeners. A giant squid-like monster from beyond has landed on this train car. Its tentacles have burst through the windows and are currently reaching for my microphone.

Cthunkle: It is I, Cthunkle.

Poppa Loo: Of course.

Cthunkle: Now that there's no Mr. Eric reminding me to be nice and good I can go back to making all of my evil dreams come true.

Poppa Loo: So you admit it, Cthunkle. You're the one turning everyone into elements of the solar system.

Cthunkle: Well, not exactly. My last evil plan was to wait for a what if question to destroy What If World while I just sort of sit back and allow it to happen.

Mamma Jamma: Cthunkle! We're in a crisis right now. You shouldn't need someone else to tell you to do the right thing.

Cthunkle: Very well, then I won't listen to you telling me to do the right thing.

Poppa Loo: Cthunkle, your tentacles appear to be turning to iron. Is that like one of your powers?

Cthunkle: Oh dear. I forgot that the things that happen on this world also affect me.

Mamma Jamma: [Smuggly] Mm-hmm.

Cthunkle: Fine. How may I help?

Poppa Loo: Well, if you can fling us ahead a few cars, we can stop this thing, somehow.

Cthunkle: Very well. But if anyone asks, the last thing I did before turning into iron was say a wickedly evil catchphrase.

Poppa Loo: Oh great. Just tell us the evil catchphrase while you throw us.

Cthunkle: Oh, uh, fine. Squid you later! No, not that! That's terrible...

Poppa Loo: Ooh, oh, Mamma Jamma, are you okay?

Mamma Jamma: I'm fine, I'm fine.

Poppa Loo: What about our droppers full of children.

Mamma Jamma: Yeah, mercury's pretty resilient.

Poppa Loo: Okay, we're climbing down into the train engine. This is a Poppa Loo's News exclusive from the train engine speeding across What If World at 88 miles an hour. And though I know time is of the essence, my feet feel like lead.

Mamma Jamma: Your feet are lead, Poppa Loo.

Poppa Loo: Oh boy. Poppa Loo's News crew, this may be my last report, and I refuse to let my last words be a catchphrase as lame as "Squid you later" so just let me think of a better one, hmm.

Mamma Jamma: Poppa Loo, I don't care if your last words are flim-flam pampers! We aren't giving up until we've tried everything.

Poppa Loo: If Mr. Eric were real, he would have put like a button here that we could push and everything would go back to normal.

Mamma Jamma: There's no magic button that makes your problems go away. You have to deal with oh my goodness! That switch!

Poppa Loo: Finally, some good news.

Mamma Jamma: A what's-capacitor!

Poppa Loo: A smoothie maker!

[Record scratch.]

Mamma Jamma: A smoothie maker?

Poppa Loo: A what's capacitor?

Mamma Jamma: Yeah, you know, the what's capacitor. The device on every train in What If World that lets you travel back in time as long as you're going exactly 88 miles an hour.

Poppa Loo: But... no smoothies.

Mamma Jamma: No, Poppa Loo, no smoothies. Just we get to go back in time to when Mr. Eric was real.

Poppa Loo: And find a smoothie machine. I like this plan.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, okay. I'm just gonna flip the switch.

Poppa Loo: And as I turned to lead all the way up to my neck, our train rocketed through space and time, landing on a subway track in New York City. And I don't mean New What City.

And there he is, a young Mr. Eric entering the train.

Hey, kid come over here!

Mr. Eric: Huh? Hello? Oh, are you like one of those living statues.

Poppa Loo: That is fairly accurate, yes.

Mamma Jamma: But that's beside the point, Sweetie. You've got to remember, you are Mr. Eric.

Mr. Eric: Um, yeah, that's what my students call me.

Poppa Loo: Can you do me a favor, Mr. Eric?

Mr. Eric: Maybe... what do you need?

Mamma Jamma: We need you to say that all the people turned back from being elements of the solar system into being just people.

Mr. Eric: Um... and all the people turned back from—

Poppa Loo: The elements in the solar system.

Mr. Eric: The elements in the solar system to being just people. [Magic noise] Whoa. Your lead paint went away. Cool trick.

Poppa Loo: Oh, thank you, Mr. Eric.

Mamma Jamma: Oh, you think that was nice? Watch me pour my kids out of these stoppers.

Zack: Oh, that was disorienting.

Zizi: I've got an everything ache.

Mr. Eric: Whoa, are you like a magician family or something? This is awesome. And that's a giant squid... monster...

Cthunkle: Okay, not "Squid you later" how about "Get tentacled?" Oh, that's even worse.

Poppa Loo: Okay, Mr. Eric appears to have passed out.

Cthunkle: He shall wake up thinking this was all a dream.

Mamma Jamma: But maybe he'll remember just enough to bring What If World back.

Zack: Should we take him home, or something?

Poppa Loo: Oh, just prop him up on a bench, he'll be fine. It's New York City, what's the worst that could happen?

[Magic time noises.]

[Falling harp scale.]

Poppa Loo: Ladies and gentlemen, this has been Poppa Loo's News.

Mamma Jamma: Alice Lee and John William, we hope you enjoyed your story. We'd like to thank Karen O'Keeffe, our co-creator.

Poppa Loo: Craig Martinson for our dandy theme song.

Cthulhu: And all you kids at home who know that if you see your world changing for the worst...

Zack: You can see information and take action to make things better.

Poppa Loo: Until we meet again–

Mamma Jamma: Keep wondering.

Poppa Loo: I'm wondering when I'm gonna get a smoothie!

Mamma Jamma: Oh, I'll smooth you!

Poppa Loo: Good! I want to be smooth.

Mamma Jamma: Well, good, you're gonna get smoothed!

[What If World theme plays.]